

CLAIMS:

1. A targeting device suitable for mounting an optical scanner thereon for scanning a surface of an object, comprising:
 - a frame;
 - a linkage slidably mounted on the frame;
 - 5 an actuator arm secured to the linkage, which actuator arm has an outer surface configured to slidably engage the surface of the object to be scanned and move in tandem with the linkage along the frame when the object to be scanned is inserted between the actuator arm and a support surface below the actuator arm; and
 - 10 a holder mounted on the linkage configured to mount the optical scanner thereon at a predetermined scanning distance from the object to be scanned engaged by the actuator arm.
2. The device of claim 1, wherein the optical scanner is an optical character reader.
3. The device of claim 1, wherein the object is a mail piece, and the holder is mounted at a position appropriate for recording region of interest address information from the mail piece.
4. The device of claim 1, further comprising a base disposable horizontally on which the frame is rigidly mounted in an upright position, with a distal end of the actuator arm in engagement with the base, an upper surface of the base comprising the support surface.
5. The device of claim 1, further comprising means for biasing the linkage, holder and actuator arm to a position at which a distal end of the actuator arm engages the support surface.

6. The device of claim 3, wherein the actuator arm comprises a pair of curved rails that slidably engages the surface of the mail piece to be scanned on opposite sides of the region of interest.

7. The device of claim 3, wherein the actuator arm comprises a curved plate that slidably engages the surface of the mail piece to be scanned, the curved plate including a centrally located hole configured to expose the region of interest for scanning.

8. A targeting device suitable for mounting an optical scanner thereon for scanning a surface of an object, comprising:

a frame;

a linkage slidably mounted on the frame;

5 a holder mounted on the linkage configured to mount the optical scanner thereon;

a stop member coupled to and extending below the linkage, the stop member being configured to stop downward vertical movement of the linkage such that the optical scanner is positioned at a predetermined scanning distance from an object to be scanned when the stop member engages the surface of the object.

9. The device of claim 8, wherein the optical scanner is an optical character reader.

10. The device of claim 8 further comprising a switch mounted on a distal end of the stop member, the switch activating the scanner when the scanner contacts the surface of the object to be scanned.

11. The device of claim 10, wherein the object is a mail piece, and the holder is mounted at a position appropriate for recording region of interest address information from the mail piece.

12. A method of reading indicia from the surface of an object with a scanner comprising;

5 sliding the object between a support surface and an actuating arm coupled to a vertically moveable linkage with a holder configured to retain the scanner mounted on the linkage such that the actuating arm, linkage and holder are lifted in tandem as the object is inserted between the support surface and actuating arm with the surface of the object to be scanned a predetermined scanning distance from the scanner; and
 activating the scanner to capture an image of the surface of the object.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the object comprises a mail piece.